

From: Lisa Henderson
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 1/25/02 3:26am
Subject: Microsoft Settlement

I understand this to be the public comment address for the Microsoft Antitrust Settlement. Here is my comment:

I am a longtime Windows and C++ programmer. Microsoft has continually used their Windows monopoly to kill any product line that competed with any of their products - by giving away the product, by threatening computer manufacturers and resellers, by revising Windows to break competing software, by using hidden Windows APIs to give their applications a performance edge that outside companies cannot match. The proposed settlement will do nothing to prevent this. This case has gone so far, to cave in now is shameful.

The arguments from Microsoft, especially that stupid integration argument, are incorrect and manufactured. They deliberately chose to integrate IE into system DLLs, made their system less stable and less secure by 'integrating' the application into the system DLLs. All they did was copy a few functions from the IE DLLs into the Windows DLLs - this is both easily reversed by them, and a completely manufactured integration. There was no good programming reason to do this - in fact, it violates a large number of programming principles (abstraction, object orientation, extra dependencies, lack of encapsulation, and poor security). A programmer who designed a system like that would be considered incompetent.

Microsoft has shown for more than a decade that they have no respect for the laws, and will do anything to increase sales and destroy the competition. This will not stop with the current very weak settlement - the settlement will encourage them to believe that they can continue their current behavior, and continue to get settlements and slap on the wrist treatment. The only solution is to hit them hard - to require either a split of the company, or to require Windows to be open source or something similar.

I have been in this business for about 7 years, and the number of companies that have come up against Microsoft and been destroyed by illegal and unethical methods is unbelievable. Lots of active and innovative markets just vanished once Microsoft showed up and began bundling, altering windows, or using internal APIs to gain an unfair advantage, and killed the market. So long as they have the Windows monopoly they will continue to abuse it, and the amount of choice the consumer has will continue to decline; the cost of the products will continue to increase.

The states have it right, this is not the time to give up. Withdraw the settlement, and let's resolve once and for all Microsoft's usurping of the software industry. I don't want or expect to see them destroyed, but they will never stop abusing their monopoly until forced to do so, and the

settlement will not do it.

Lisa Henderson
San Diego, CA 92122